

# THE CHURCH AND ECONOMICS

## What others have said

THE South African State, has taken over the myth of communism . . . Threats about hell-fire and eternal damnation are replaced by threats and warnings about the horrors of a tyrannical atheistic terrorist communist regime - a kind of hell on earth. This is a very convenient way of frightening some people into accepting any kind of domination and exploitation by a capitalistic minority. *The Kairos Document.*

They are so obsessed and pre-occupied with what they call 'the threat of communism' to the extent of blessing any regime in the world that is anti-communist however evil and corrupt it may be . . . in their understanding of their faith they cannot see the possibility of being socialist and also christian . . . the western capitalist culture has become an idol of these groups . . . their god whom they love and worship. *The Evangelical Document.*

We must talk to our people about how the oneness of humankind is being destroyed by the conflict between the few consumer nations and many nations being consumed. Maulana Faried Esack: Tutu Peace Lecture Marx's perception that evil is to be found, not just in individuals, but in the very structures of economic and social relationships, has its origins in the Old Testament itself. . . and the same perception finds expression in the New Testament. Faith in the City: the Church of England Report.

The 'collective conscience' to which Pope Paul VI refers is of the highest importance

because it is that complex of social attitudes which to a large extent regulates the behaviour of members of society . . . Structural sin and violence abound . . . The structure of society itself, dictated by race and class considerations, may make it virtually impossible to remedy the disruption of family life and the hardships imposed on workers. — *SA Catholic Bishops Conference.*

The Christian church bears a very heavy responsibility for not having a critique of its own dehumanisation by its connivance with capitalism — for what it has done to itself, let alone to the people as a whole. Many of the ideological assumptions of the Christian church . . . come from the predominant capitalist mode of production and not from the Gospel of Jesus Christ. — *Fr. Michael Lapsley.*

Unless we participate actively in the rebellion against those social structures and economic organisation which condemn men to poverty and degradation then the church will become irrelevant. — *Julius Nyerere.*

Peace will not come in Africa by the churches who are in Africa, but by the churches in those big countries which are rocking the economies of these small countries. Those churches must conscientise the people in their countries to say: What are we doing that is wrong? — *Philip Mudenda, Christian Council of Zambia.*

There seems to be a network in place of those who have an interest in dominating the world and in Africa they are working through the South African regime. . . I

see a process of an economic recolonisation of Africa developing. — *Mosi A Kisare of the All Africa Council of Churches.*

The world financial system is a greater cause of hunger in Africa than drought . . . In Africa today the wealth of the African nations does not benefit the majority of the African people. It benefits first and foremost the system of international capitalism and after that the members of the national bourgeois class. We have economic systems which can only function if they continue to be useful to the transnational corporations and the system of international capitalism. . . The issue of rich and poor is seen as a purely moral issue. But the issue is more than that: it is an economic issue and a political issue.

Today there is no way the Church in Africa can escape these conflicts' — *Sam Kobia of the Kenya Council of Churches.*

People ask me the question: How do you reconcile your faith and your politics? I say it never occurred to me that there was a problem because they are two sides of the same coin. Politics are the practical expression of my faith. . . Christians have to realise there is much more to Marxism than atheism, and Marxists have come to realise that Christianity can be revolutionary . . . So the Church will have to come to terms with this kind of experience before they can make any meaningful contribution. — *Canaan Banana, Former Methodist President of Zimbabwe.*